*Three* CONSIDERATIONS *proposed to Mr.* William Penn, *Concerning the Validity and Security of his New* Magna Charta *for Liberty of Conscience, by* A. Baptist; *which may be worthy the Consideration of all the* Quakers, *and of all my* Dissenting Brethren *also that have* Votes *in the Choice of Parliament-Men.*

I Desire you M. *Penn*, and all my *Dissenting Brethren* to *Consider*, and then *Answer* this:

First, What validity or security can any pretended or designed future *New Law* or *Charter* have, when we see so many of the *present Laws* we already have may be, and are by the *Dispensing Power Dispensed with*? Have we, or can we have any *Higher Power* here in *England*, than *King, Lords and Commons in Parliament Assembled*? The Laws that are now *Dispensed* with and rendred useless, were they not made by *that* Power? Pray tell me, can your New Charter [if you had it] be made by any *Higher* or *other* Power? And M. *Penn*, let your *Brethren*, and us know your mind honestly. Do you think there is any *Temporal* or *Spiritual*-Power here in *England* above the *Dispencing* Power? And can you make it appear to us?

Shall your *New Charter* have a *Penalty* inserted to be inflicted on the infringers or breakers of it or no? if not, what will your *New Charter* signifie? Not three skips of a *Louse*; and if it have a *Penalty*, Cannot any *King* by his *Prerogative* and *Authority Royal*, *Dispence* with the *Penalty*? And what will it signifie then?

That you need not doubt at all, but may be certain of this; you shall hear what *Roman Catholicks* have already told us, and judg'd is the Law in this matter; nay, and such a Right so inherent and so inseparable from the Crown, That a King cannot divest himself of it if he would, nor is bound by his Word or any Declaration he makes, no not in or by Parliament.

Take it in M. *R. Langborns* own words in his Book, touching the Kings Right in Dispensing with Penal Laws, p. 3, 4. *That this Trust, and this Power of Dispencing with Penal Laws, are inseparably united unto the Royal Person of the King, that he cannot transfer, give away or separate the same from himself; consequently it is inherent in his Royal Person, that is, in his Crown.* Coke lib. 7. fol. 36.

*That the King cannot by his Grant, nor yet by Act of Parliament, Bar himself of any that is inherent in and inseparably annexed into his Royal Per-*



*son,*

*ſon, for that in ſo doing he ſhould ceaſe to be King, and conſequently change and ſubvert the Government, which our Law allows not.*

*That (therefore) when ever the King to gratifie a Parliament, doth Conſent to Parliament to any Law, by which he ſeems to ſtrip himſelf of, or depart from, any Prerogative, or Right, which in truth is inſeparable from him as King; or when the King in Parliament or otherwiſe by any Declaratory Words or Speeches, ſeems to relinquiſh ſuch Right: ſuch Conſent to ſuch Law is no more than an Agreement on his part not to uſe that Right ordinarily; but only in Extraordinary Occaſions, when in his Princely Wiſdom he ſhall find it neceſſary, and for publick good. But this Bars him not to uſe this Right again, when he ſees juſt cauſe ſo to do, Nor can any Declaratory Words ſpoken by the King, or his aſſent incerted into an Act of Parliament, Eſtop the King in any Cauſe of this nature.* So far he.

Now where's the aſſurance then of *Will. Pen*'s New *Charter* for Liberty? Who can tell what *King* we may have after our preſent *Sovereign*, whether ſo merciful or ſo juſt? Or what Sheriffs the next King may chuſe, and what Returns of Parliament-Men they may make; for you know the forfeiture on the Sheriffs making a falſe Return is no great matter, and cannot a King pardon it by his *Diſpenſing* Power or Authority Royal? What will, nay what can your New *Charter* then ſignifie, when it either is or may be (according to your own Doctrine) either invalidated, diſanulled, or anihilated in an inſtant?

Secondly, Pray M. *Pen*, Conſider what your *New Charter* can ſignifie, ſo long as there is a *High Commiſſion Court*, or a *High Commiſſion for Eccleſiaſtical Affairs* ſet up? Cannot thoſe *Commiſſioners* take any of your, and our Preachers, Teachers, or Miniſters to task when they pleaſe? Cannot they when they have a mind to it, Suſpend Mr. *Pen*, or *George Whitehead*, M. *Alſop*, *Mr. Lobb*, or *Mr. Mead*, or *Mr. Bowyer*, as well as the Biſhop of *London*, D. *Sharp*, or D. *Doughty*? Notwithſtanding your New *Charter*? Cannot the *Court* when they will, or ſhall think fit, or be commanded, Suſpend, Silence, or forbid any or all the Diſſenting *Miniſters* to Preach any longer in their *Meetings*, if they will not read any Declaration or Order whatever, that the *King* ſhall ſet forth and require them to Read? Remember the *Magdalen Colledge-Men*, Remember alſo that Sawce for a *Gooſe* is or may be Sawce for a *Gander*.

This Conſideration is further grounded on the Words in their late Order ſet forth in the *Gazette*, *For Contempt of his Majeſties Authority Royal*; Now let us ſee before we leap, whether that will run no farther than juſt *M. Pen* will have it. Can he ſtop the Current of it when he

he pleases? If he could, we are not sure he would, for formerly he had no great kindness (we know) for us *Baptists* and other *Dissenters*, and if he could and would, we are not sure of his life how long. Therefore it will be the greatest piece of weakness and folly in the world for us to dance after his and the *Jesuits* pipe alone, contrary both to all common sense and reason, and our own general interest.

Thirdly, And above all Consider what Security or Validity this *New Charter* can be of, *when there is a standing Army kept on foot?* Do Canons hear *Reason*, or regard *Laws?* Will *Dragoons* mind *Charters*, or Arguments do you think? Pray M. *Pen* tell us whether they have done or do now so in *France?* We need not go far off for an Instance, it is so near us as fifty or sixty miles, which one would think is nigh enough to open our Eye-sights, if we are not strangely infatuated and given up by the Almighty to ruin and destruction, which *the good Lord prevent.*

M. *Pen*, How have the *Dragoons* minded our *Privileges* (in these early days) in divers places here in *England* already? What think you of their Carriage and Quartering, will it agree with your *New Charter* for *Liberty?* The Inkeepers and Victuallers beside many other can give you an account, now if you were truly *a Friend for Liberty for Liberties sake*, as you publish and pretend to the world, you would mind and inform *us*, and your *Brethren* of *these* and the like things, and not mincingly pass them over, and both delude and deceive us and them.

Many perticulars more might be inlarged here, but a word to the wise is enough.

I desire M. *Pen* only to weigh seriously, and give an honest, clear and satisfactory Answer to these three points; in the mean time it appears to be highly the duty of all Men, as well *Dissenters* as others who have Votes in chusing *Parliament Men*; above all to chuse such faithful *Patriots* as will take care of these things already hinted, and others that may be brought before them; that our *Liberties*, our *Laws*, and our *Lives* may be preserved from ill designing men, add from future *Quowarianto's*; and all the high Violaters and Infringers thereof called to an account, and justly punished. This will well become them and secure us, more than any *titular Charter* whatever.

*Liberty* is indeed a fine word, but remember (Brethren) what the Apostle *Peter* hath told us, That some there were that *while they promise them Liberty, they themselves are the Servants of Corruption*, and observe what follows, *for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in Bondage*: how do you, how will you like that Word?

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The Name of *Liberty* ſignifies nothing without the *Subſtance*, and the *Continuance*, *Certainty* and *Security* of it.

Let us endeavor to *ſecure* our *Subſtantial* Liberties, our *Engliſh* Liberties we have and ought to have, rather than to get the *Name* of *New* ones, which may fatally bring us into greater *Bondage* in the end.

Did you never hear of a certain Act or Bill for the Repealing of a *Penal Law*, that was loſt (when the late King was to have Sign'd it) betwixt the Houſe of Commons, and Houſe of Lords, by a ſtrange Trick of an honeſt Clerk of the Parliament.

*Do not part with a Gooſe, for the ſticking down a Feather.*

Children know, and can tell us, *A Bird in the Hand, is worth two in the Buſh.*

Finally Brethren, *Let us be of one mind* in our *great Concerns*, though we may *differ* in ſome *Circumſtances*, and ſmall trivial things.

Let us not in revenge (though it be ſweet) *put out both our own Eyes, to put out one of our Brothers.* Let us not be ſo ſilly, *to deſtroy our ſelves, to hurt others.*

But let all Proteſtants *Unite* in mutual *Condeſcenſion*, *Affection*, and *Intereſt*; it is high time: Remember our Saviour hath told us, *a Houſe divided againſt it ſelf cannot ſtand.* Nothing will *Save* us but *Union.* *Let Brotherly Love and Charity continue.*

Farwell and be wiſe whilſt you may, leſt you *repent* when 'tis too *late*, and your *repentance* will do you no *good.*